

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 6, 28 and 29 are presented for consideration, with Claim 1 being independent.

Claim 1 has been amended to better distinguish several features of Applicants' invention. As will be appreciated, Claim 1 is presented in the same form shown to the Examiner during the personal interview of February 6, 2008, as discussed below. Claims 28 and 29 are submitted to provide an additional scope of protection. Support for the new claims can be found, for example, in Figures 2A-2C, 3A, 3B, and in Figures 6A and 6B, and the accompanying specification.

Initially, Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended toward their representative during the personal interview of February 6, 2008. The interview focused primarily on the outstanding rejection of Claims 1, 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Okada '354 in view of Kay '914.

Claim 1 of Applicants' invention relates to a laminating method for forming a laminated layer in the form of a transparent film on a surface of an image on a printed object. The method includes the steps of transferring a laminate having a laminated layer and a heat resistive base material layer to the surface of the printed object for laminating to form a laminated printed object, a rear edge peeling step, and a front edge peeling step. Claim 1 has been amended to include a finishing step of peeling off the heat resistive base material between the front edge and the rear edge of the laminated printed object, with the finishing step being performed after the rear edge peeling step and the front edge peeling step.

As discussed at the interview, by providing a finishing step of peeling off the heat resistive base material between the front edge and the rear edge, and performing this step after the rear edge peeling step and the front edge peeling step, a high quality laminated object can be provided.

The primary citation to Okada relates to a lamination method having a laminate film comprised of a backing m and a laminate layer e applied to an object k (see Figure 7). As best shown in Figure 8, a guide peeling roller 12 aides in separating the backing m from the laminated object. By moving the guide peeling roller laterally or vertically, a point p at which the separation takes place can be changed (see Figure 9).

In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, however, Okada does not teach or suggest, among other features, a step of peeling off the backing between the front edge and the rear edge of the laminated printed object after a rear edge peeling step and a front edge peeling step are performed. To the contrary, Okada is understood to provide a conventional laminating method where the backing m is peeled from the laminated object beginning at a front edge and continuing to a rear edge. It was agreed at the personal interview that Okada does not teach or suggest the finishing step feature of Applicants' invention.

The secondary citation to Kay relates to an image enhancement method and is relied upon for teaching a transparent transfer layer. Kay fails, however, to compensate for the deficiencies in Okada as discussed above with respect to Claim 1. Therefore, the proposed combination of Okada and Kay, even if proper, still fails to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed

invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1, 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in independent Claim 1 is patentable over the cited art. In addition, dependent Claims 5, 6, 28 and 29 set forth additional features of Applicants' invention. Independent consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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